

Ahihi-Kina'u, Keone o'io Advisory Group
September 12, 2005
Group Memory

The meeting began with an opening pule.

The first item discussed was the recently dropped court case. The group expressed concern and frustration over the action of the prosecutor in dropping the case. Randy Awo explained to the group that the department was also dismayed and had met with the prosecutor to come up with a joint plan for future action to address the situation. He stated that he was not at liberty to discuss the details of the plan but asked that the advisory group trust that they would be moving forward. The group thanked Randy for his continuing efforts and noted that the current situation was a desecration of Hawaiian cultural sites and values and that they hoped it would be remedied soon.

The group agreed by consensus to send a letter to Peter Young the chair of the BLNR supporting DoCARE's effort to resolve the situation and noting that allowing this individual to continue to inhabit the cave is an insult to Native Hawaiians, residents and neighbors. Charlie and Bill will draft and send the letter on behalf of the group as soon as possible.

The Hawaii Wildlife Fund handed out and went over their update. Please see handout. They did note that use appears to be going up and commended both Matt and Joe for their excellent work.

The issue of a gate at La Parouse was discussed. The gate would be to increase accountability of users of the area. The proposal was originally for the gate to go on state land and subsequently the private landowner in the area volunteered to have the gate placed on his land. The gate would be accessible through a combination which will be changed periodically but can be obtained by providing appropriate contact information and renewable as long as the user follows the rules and is a good steward of the area. It was noted that this meets the needs of the fishermen for access. The group noted that there may be areas where the department needs to make a decision about just allowing hiking access as vehicles do a lot of damage. Matt noted that where vehicular access was to be allowed it would be routed in such a way to avoid sensitive areas and sites. It was noted that this gate would mostly control access to private land and only a small part of the area behind the gate would be public. It was also noted that the affected private landowners in the area had been talked to and that at this point had either given permission or were moving in that direction. Further discussions are necessary to finalize placement etc. The group urged the entities involved to move this forward as quickly as possible.

Matt then presented the draft management plan for the area. He stressed that it is a draft and has not been through departmental processes yet. He wanted to get the Advisory's Group input in the very early stages. The draft plan is attached to these notes. The

comments and concerns expressed by the group are noted below in general there seemed to be a lot of support for the plan.

- The dumps (Kānehā) parking area should not be paved – such an action would imply that the area is a park rather than a NARs
- There is still frustration as to why we can't just close it all off if the goal is to protect the resource – Matt reminded the group that the NARs Commission had an AG opinion that they can not close it down under current rules
- The group suggested that perhaps we could try to close it temporarily until a management plan is in place that adequately deals with resource protection – during this period maybe traffic could be diverted to “Turtle Town”
- The group again requested that the department begin to use the proper Hawaiian names for all areas – such as referring to the Fish Bowl area as Moku Ha
- It was also noted that one way to manage is through having eyes and ears on site and that if the area were closed totally not only would there be no public eyes and ears on site but that it would be hard to justify staff presence and the lack of these resources on site would probably result in an increase in illegal activities such as poaching and parties.
- The point was made that some level of managed use is probably preferable to then no use to provide a presence on site
- The group noted that money is hard to find and they liked that the plan proposed some type of user fee structure
- They noted that sometimes there is a perception that managing open space does not cost money – it does!
- The group noted that there need to be exceptions to the user fees such as school groups
- Also noted was that managed use is good if it works to date this group has not seen it work and that that is one thing they will be watching for as these plans move forward – also that if you are going to manage you better make sure that you don't spend so much time figuring it out and implementing it that you have nothing left to manage
- The plan also need to look at the cumulative impacts – if an entry gate and parking plan establish a maximum number of vehicles at any one time need to look at the impact on the areas that you would be sending the overflow to i.e. down the road or other places
- The group is still confused as to why it is so hard to establish the road ownership as the County's – some members sighted precedence all the way back to Mayor Tavaréz
- The group had concerns about the number of areas that would still be open to hiking in the NAR – they felt that more areas other than just those noted in the plan needed to be closed to hiking – some also felt that the proposed guided hikes should only be available for education uses
- If guided hikes are implemented there is a parking issue for these hikes that would need to be addressed

PUBLIC COMMENT

- In looking at a fee system you should consider a standard fee system for all users – may make it two-tiered but all users should contribute to the management of the area
- If you limit parking to the dumps site this would increase foot traffic on the road which could produce an unanticipated impact of pedestrian safety on the road since there will still be some vehicular traffic – plan needs to identify and address possible unanticipated impacts
- I agree the area should be closed until a plan is in place
- The Kihei Community would like to receive updates and be included since the NAR is in their community
- Need to get real about enforcement – when was the last time anyone actually got fined for building a fire in the NAR? – if can't have enforcement presence all the time at least you could do sweeps
- Need not only the enforcement but the follow through on enforcement actions
- I am not in favor of closing areas what we need is education and enforcement
- Not in favor of paving parking lot – it encourages people to stop – and adversely impact percolation and runoff
- Like to idea of fees to take care of the area – just get it done!
- No paving of the parking area is needed – it has been used for parking for awhile now and the surface is holding up fine – maybe use boulders to delineate stalls.
- Make sure that the La Parouse gate does not impact foot traffic to the area
- Like the idea of a combination gate lock for access by responsible users
- Don't pave it creates a welcome mat for people
- Do not want to pay fees as a local – look at visitor fees – if two tiered for short and long term visitors OK
- Access for Kanaka Ma`oli is a must and this right must be clearly defined
- Acknowledge that it is difficult for fishermen and that accesses are closing down in many areas – think combination access for those fishermen that behave responsibly is a great idea
- Need to return to the correct Hawaiian names for areas
- If we need to close while we put the plan in place do it
- Will there be more discussion on commercial use in the area?
- Consider showing a movie about the sensitivity of our ecosystem in general on the plane
- There are no changes proposed to parking at La Parouse Bay
- If you are planning a trail signage look at informative signage that also includes information like hike is 4 to 5 miles and dangerous etc.

FINAL ADVISORY GROUP COMMENTS

- Consider closing temporarily for healing of the resources and plan development
- The NAR commission and staff will be meeting in the next 3 weeks to look at rule changes etc.

- As the rules currently are and according to the AG opinion we can not close the area currently
- The “trails” discussed to the sensitive areas are not really formally established trails does this make a difference?
- We should urge the media to use the proper names to start to change the view of the area
- Matt will arrange a meeting with DLNR and the private landowners to move the gate at La Parouse forward

Meeting closed with a pule at 12:15